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ABSTRACT

This case study examined the extent and nature of the critical reflection and critically reflective teaching evident among three secondary preservice teachers, noting factors that hindered and supported the instructor's attempts to promote critically reflective teaching and discussing social reconstructionist factors. The paper emphasizes the second half of the project, which involved the student teaching semester. Data collection included student interviews at the start, midpoint, and conclusion of student teaching; several observation visits to students' classrooms; and field notes. Data also came from written artifacts (structured pre-observation forms prior to each observation visit, five journal assignments, and unit plans, lesson plans, student handouts, and evaluation tools). Data analysis involved the constant comparative method. Results indicated that all participants were critically reflective about teaching. Critical reflection carried across semesters, though it was not the predominant form of thinking for any of the students. Factors influencing critical reflection included (in descending order) journal assignments, study participation, observation visits, peer observations, and return-to-campus seminars. In the methods semester, the emphasis on social reconstructionism and democratic education had little impact on participants' thinking. However, in the student teaching semester, each participant provided varying amounts of evidence of reflection on the construction of a more equitable, just, and democratic society. (Contains 33 references.) (SM)

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ED 423 214

STUDENT TEACHING AND CRITICAL REFLECTION: A TEACHER EDUCATION CASE STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

While reflective teaching has become a popular aim in teacher education, not a lot is known about how this aim is accomplished. Calderhead (1992) points to a dearth of relevant theory and empirical research on preparing reflective teachers and concludes that "... there is little to guide the practice of teachers and tutors involved in programs aiming to promote reflective teaching" (p.143). For what little is known about the process of teaching reflective teaching, even less is understood of how *critically* reflective teaching is promoted among preservice teachers (Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991). Critically reflective teaching is a goal of numerous teacher preparation programs in the US and abroad (see for example, Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991; Valli, 1992, Novak, 1994). Among those teacher educators who have sought to promote critical reflection, reports of success have been limited. Their experiences suggest that critically reflective teaching appears to be an aim that is more desired than it is achieved.

The elusiveness of critically reflective teaching has prompted many unanswered questions about whether or not it is a realistic aim for preservice teachers in the first place (Calderhead, 1992; Rudduck, 1989). For example, Cochran-Smith (1991) argues that critically reflective teaching can only be learned by beginning teachers working in schools with experienced teachers who themselves value critical reflection. Others have suggested that critical reflection is an aim that rests beyond the pale of typical preservice teachers' development, and is best thought of as a trait that is acquired by teachers who have several years of classroom experience (Berliner, 1988; Kagan, 1992). Are these views correct? The matter is far from settled. Progress on these questions will be made only through examination of the experiences teacher educators and preservice teachers have in programs that seek to promote critically reflective teaching. The study reported in this paper is an examination of one such experience.

As an instructor of a social studies methods class and a supervisor of field experiences, I examined the consequences of my efforts to promote critically reflective teaching among preservice teachers in the final year of a teacher education program at a large Midwestern research university. An instance of practitioner inquiry, the research consisted of a case study of three preservice teachers as they progressed through their final two semesters, a semester long methods course followed by a semester of student

teaching. Given the lack of knowledge about promoting critically reflective teaching at the preservice level, the purpose of the research was to provide an empirically grounded examination of two main questions: 1) What was the extent and nature of the critical reflection and critically reflective teaching evident among three preservice teachers in the Methods and student teaching semesters of a research university secondary social studies teacher education program? 2) What factors hindered and supported my attempt to promote critically reflective teaching? This paper reports on the second half of this project-- the student teaching semester.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The nature of these questions required an investigative approach that enabled an in-depth and comprehensive study of preservice teachers as they experienced their student teaching semester. As Russell (1993) suggests, reflective teaching cannot readily be assessed except through observations of teachers in practice and in-depth discussions with them about how they approach their work. My position as a university supervisor of field experiences put me in a unique position to make these observations and carry on these discussions. Accordingly, I utilized a qualitative case study, action research methodology.

Qualitative case study yields an in-depth analysis of a limited number of subjects, who together comprise the case in question, in their natural setting (Stake, 1995). An issue for this study is not just a matter of how much critically reflective teaching is evident in beginning social studies teachers, but how that construct became a part of their teaching. What experiences seem to facilitate and encumber their development as critically reflective teachers? Part of my mission with this study is to provide a descriptive account of a kind of teacher education about which not a lot is known; another part is to produce tentative hypotheses about the factors which influence preservice teacher critical reflection.

Qualitative case study fixes one aspect of this study's methodological orientation, action research establishes the other. Action research is defined as intentional, systematic inquiry by practitioners into their own practice (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1982). According to this definition, this proposed research is an intentional, systematic inquiry into my own work with preservice social studies teachers in helping them become critically reflective teachers. Throughout the span of this research, my objective was to

do more than merely understand a complex social phenomenon (preservice teachers learning critically reflective teaching). I also played an active role in influencing that phenomenon. I attempted to carry out my role as instructor in ways that I hoped would encourage the participant's critical reflection.

My deep involvement in shaping the context in which this study took place meant that my experience in this research had two facets-- as a qualitative field researcher and as a practicing teacher educator. The manner in which the study unfolded, the data I found relevant, and the conclusions I drew were influenced by these two dimensions. No efforts were made to keep them separate. Indeed, I believe my dual positioning as a researcher and teacher were complimentary and enhanced the quality of this study. This research merges practical inquiry with formal research, an idea that is gaining interest in the educational research community (Richardson, 1994). In writing up this report, both perspectives were incorporated as I attempted to balance outsider and insider perspectives.

Research Setting

In the fall semester of 1996, I was a University Supervisor in a secondary social studies certification program at a major, Midwestern, research university. My duties in this role consisted of supervising five student teachers from a group of fourteen preservice teachers who had completed a Secondary Social Studies Methods course I taught the prior spring semester. I supervised five of these students. Meetings between supervisor and student teacher, as structured by the secondary social studies program, happened through five school visits following a clinical supervision model (Goldhammer, et al., 1980). In the semester under study, these observations were supplemented by four return-to-campus seminars, a series of five journal assignments, and two peer observations.

In this program, student teachers were placed with cooperating teachers in much the same way as they were in those programs studied by Goodlad (1990)—by convenience. Though the influence of cooperating teachers on student teachers is a matter of some debate, I agree with McIntyre, Byrd, and Foxx (1996), who argue, "Programs that focus on the development of reflective practitioners must create experiences in the field that enable preservice students not only to practice reflectivity but also to observe it being practiced by experienced teachers" (p. 172). Unfortunately, there was no

systematic effort made in our program to identify such teachers, let alone to thoughtfully match them with student teachers based on an assessment of their educational needs.

In designing the teacher education curriculum over the course of both semesters, a chief aim was to further the development of critically reflective teaching in these beginning social studies teachers. Course readings, assignments, and in-class activities were all designed to further critical perspectives toward social studies teaching and to encourage consideration of school practices against the tenets of democratic education. As well, when possible, I looked for ways to incorporate a critical orientation into the supervision experiences. The actions I take in working with student teachers are framed by my sense of responsibility "to make explicit the hidden questions about schooling, to promote a critical and reflective attitude about teaching and learning, to nurture a probing sense of inquiry, and to stimulate commitment to and caring for children among preservice teachers" (Armento, 1996, p. 494).

Participants

To investigate my research questions, all students enrolled in Methods were informed of the study on the first day of class and invited to take part. Twelve of the fourteen volunteered, and the three participants[1] were chosen at random from this group to participate in this in-depth case study.[2] I chose to study a small number of preservice teachers because I believed doing so would enable practicable in-depth, holistic inquiry, given my limited resources as the sole researcher. The lack of a theoretical and knowledge base on preservice teacher education for critical reflection left me with no clear sense of the personal characteristics that might influence how beginning teachers develop as critically reflective teachers. Thus, beyond seeking a balanced gender sample, no attempts were made to select participants on the basis of pre-determined categories (e.g. age, race, measures of academic achievement, etc.).

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[1] Four students made up the original sample-- two females and two males. The fourth volunteer withdrew from participation toward the end of the methods class semester, and asked that the data she provided not be included in the final report.

[2] Though I refer to this research, in its entirety, as a case study, the manner of reporting more closely resembles that of a multicase study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). That is, three separate case studies are reported, one for each of the three participants. In most respects, these three cases were all treated as separate units of analysis. However, since my analysis and reporting were collectively informed by all of these cases, the sum of these individual cases comprises this research project, referred to here as a case study.

As it turned out, the three participants were a fairly diverse lot. Amy was 23 years old, White, completing her undergraduate degree in education, and a native of a neighboring Midwestern state. Leonard, White, age 45 and a former pastor, was a returning student seeking teaching certification after completing undergraduate degrees in anthropology and comparative religion and a Master of Divinity degree in the Pacific Northwest. Nick, White, age 25, was raised in the Midwest and had earned a Bachelors degree in psychology at an Ivy League school before returning to seek a teaching certificate in this program.

Data Collection

Collecting data for this study hinged on an operational conception of critical reflection and critically reflective teaching. In an area of research where no such widely accepted conception exists (Calderhead, 1992; Sparks-Langer, 1992; Hatton & Smith, 1994), researchers are in a position to stipulate their own views. Yet as Korthagen and Wubbels (1991) argue, every conception of reflective teaching assumes some view of good teaching. Thus researchers who propose conceptions of reflective teaching (and critically reflective teaching) should make explicit their underlying notions of good practice. For this study then, I utilized a two-tiered conceptualization of critical reflection and critically reflective teaching-- a broad/general sense; and a strict/social reconstructionist sense. In the broad sense of the terms, I have defined the main concepts under study as following:

-- Critical reflection is deliberation about the moral and ethical dimensions of education.

-- Critically reflective teaching is instructional practice informed by critical reflection.

Drawing from the work of van Manen (1977), critical reflection is distinguished from technical reflection and practical reflection. The former is reflection concerned with the means to accomplish unexamined ends. The latter allows for a deeper examination of means and ends and is concerned with clarifying assumptions underlying educational process and explicating the rationales for educational goals.

Going further, supporting this conception of critically reflective teaching is a view of good teaching drawn from the social reconstructionist reform tradition in U.S. teacher education (Liston and Zeichner, 1991). Social reconstructionists argue that, because schooling practices are never neutral in

relation to the larger social order, educators should strive to develop a democratic vision of the good society based on the ideals of community, equality, caring, and freedom. This vision can then be used as a referent in making the difficult curricular and instructional decisions that would help their students take part in social transformation. Here, critically reflective teaching is fixed to a notion of education's role in contributing to a more democratic and just society. Critically reflective teachers see the connections between what they do in the classroom, other schooling practices, and the broader social and political contexts surrounding their work. Thus, in the strict/social reconstructionist sense of the terms:

-- Critical reflection is deliberation about wider social, historical, political, and cultural contexts of education, and/or deliberation about relationships between educational practice and the construction of a more equitable, just, and democratic society.

-- Critically reflective teaching is instructional practice informed by critical reflection.

Data Sources

Other instances of teacher education research investigating critical reflection among preservice teachers have relied primarily on a single data source, for example, student teacher action research reports (Gore & Zeichner, 1991), reports written by teacher education students of their experiences (Hatton & Smith, 1994), and student-written case investigations (LaBoskey,1994). The limited number of participants, and my in-depth involvement as participant-researcher, afforded me an opportunity to go beyond written reports to seek evidence of critical reflection in multiple settings. Interviews were conducted with case study participants at the start, midpoint, and conclusion of the student teaching semester. Four to six observation visits were made to each participant's classroom to observe instruction. Field notes, containing both descriptive and reflective material (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), resulted from these observations and various other interactions with the participants throughout the semester. Finally, participants produced numerous written artifacts. For each observation visit, they were expected to fill out a structured pre-observation form. Five journal assignments were collected throughout the semester. Also, unit plans, individual lesson plans, student handouts, and evaluation

tools offered further insight into their developing practice. All written materials produced by study participants were collected, photocopied (if returned to participants), and included in their data files.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed utilizing the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). My research questions established the concepts of critical reflection and critically reflective teaching, both in the broad and strict senses of the terms, as central features orienting initial data analysis. As well, I established two additional categories to structure my data interpretation: social studies rationales and democratic education. These two categories stem from the theoretical underpinnings of my rationale as a teacher educator in social studies. The initial step involved in-process evaluation as data were collected. Data were compiled in separate files for each participant. Records of significant events and statements drawn directly from the field were reviewed, color coded, and supplemented by interpretive comments shortly after collection. The seven core coding categories-- critical reflection and critically reflective teaching broadly defined, critical reflection and critically reflective teaching strictly defined, social studies rationales, and democratic education-- remained constant through both semesters. More fluid were the categories tied to factors of influence. These emerged from ongoing analysis and included those explicitly identified by the study participants and those that became apparent based on a comparison of various data sources (e.g. comparing lesson observations and interview data). Data sets were reviewed inductively, either in sections or as a whole, repeatedly during the data collection phase of the study to seek out key linkages among factors of influence and the seven core categories.

Though in-process data analysis was an integral part of the study, the most thorough reflection on data took place after both semesters ended when notes and other data sources could be read and synthesized in their entirety. This was done partly to take advantage of an analytical perspective that included the entire body of data and partly because the demands of researching and teaching/supervising during the two semesters left me limited time for in-depth and sustained reflection. Frequent comparisons of data collected from different sources were made to seek out confirmation or disconfirmation of tentative conclusions. Post-data collection analysis enabled an opportunity to carefully review data and interpretations made earlier in the study one-step removed from my position

as instructor and university supervisor. In this way, my analysis reflects insights yielded from two distinct and (I would argue) complimentary postures, that of a practicing teacher educator and an educational researcher.

FINDINGS: AMY

Critical Reflection and Critically Reflective Teaching

Amy experienced student teaching in two separate placements during two different semesters. Her half-semester high school placement overlapped the end of the Methods class semester in the spring, and her full-semester middle school placement took place the following fall. Over this time period, Amy provided numerous examples of her critical reflection. To what extent this thinking influenced her practice was more difficult to discern. Judging by how infrequently such concerns "appeared" during her placements, critical reflection accounted for only a small part of her thinking about her developing practice. Her critical reflection appeared limited to several themes, to which she returned during the span of both student teaching placements. Predominant among these themes were gender in schooling and interpersonal relationships. There was very limited evidence to suggest that her critical reflection took into account the democratic and social reconstructionist emphases of her Methods class and my supervision. In this section, I attempt to describe the nature of Amy's critical reflection and the context in which this reflection occurred.

Amy completed a half-semester placement in the lone high school of a school district carved out of a portion of the larger metropolitan area and surrounded by the city's larger public school district. Because of its restricted boundaries, Waubesa High School's student population was largely White and middle class. As a suburban enclave, the school appeared somewhat isolated from (though certainly not immune to) the challenges posed by the increasing diversity of the larger, surrounding school district. Here, the experience in planning and leading instruction Amy was given was relatively extensive when compared to other half semester placements in this program. She taught lessons and, in several cases, entire units in a number of different classes, including a senior-level Advanced Placement Psychology class and two different senior-level "Concepts for Living" sections. Amy was enthusiastic about her experience at this school and spoke highly of her cooperating teacher. She credited this experience with

helping her advance her thinking about democratic education and critically reflective teaching. As she explained, these two concepts were largely abstract theoretical constructs through most of Methods, but she claimed they took on real meaning as she witnessed school practices.

In particular, Amy saw herself as a critically reflective teacher when she considered interpersonal relationships among teachers and students. At this early point in her student teaching experience, a crucial aim for Amy was establishing a classroom climate in which students feel comfortable, valued, and free to contribute. Several important questions were prominent in her thinking about the moral foundations of practice: "Are students treating each other with respect? Is the teacher giving the students a place to voice their opinions? Is the teacher letting all the students have a voice? Are they only listening to particular voices?" (interview, 6-6-96). Though she had difficulty articulating the manner in which these questions influenced her curriculum decisions, she did understand that the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching play out in the relations among class members. Such an understanding shaped her description of the very meaning she held for critical reflection, "It's thinking about how you are teaching, what's happening in the classroom, your interactions between you and the students, interactions between the students, and thinking about that on a moral, social level" (interview, 6-6-96).

In my first observation of her teaching, Amy taught a lesson she planned on "obedience to authority" for her AP Psychology class. Her rationale for this particular lesson evidences her critical reflection about interpersonal relationships. From the start, she struggled with the pressure in such a course to "teach to the test" and cover content, often at the expense of in-depth student engagement with important questions. Though consideration of the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching was not a central feature of our conversation during this classroom visit, Amy did demonstrate some reflection and concern that can be characterized as critically reflective. For example, the topic of obedience to authority appealed to her as she planned the lesson. Her students' obedience to authority was linked to her growing sense of critique about standard school practices. In the post-observation conference she noted:

> Think of all the times that students obey in their lives and how much obeying they've had to do to get to an AP Psychology class. That's why when my cooperating teacher and I were going

> through this, I'm like, "I really want to teach this because I think it is something we need to talk about."... I think this is really important, especially for kids that have been through school and have been trained to obey what the teacher says and do what people do. (notes, 4-26-96)

Amy believed students should learn about issues such as obedience and conformity not just because they would appear on an end-of-year AP exam, but because doing so would enhance their ability to act as capable moral agents.

Another example of her critical reflection in this context was apparent in my second observation of her teaching. Given a free hand to set the curriculum in her Concepts for Living class, Amy designed a lesson on harmful gender stereotypes. The lesson featured a "fishbowl" discussion technique in which students were separated into two large groups by gender. Each group took a turn sitting in a circle in the center of the room discussing questions written by students of the opposite sex. Following each same-sex discussion was a whole class discussion led by Amy. She hoped that this lesson would help students question what she called "assumptions and stereotypes held about members of the opposite sex" (notes, 5-29-96).

For the ways in which Amy justified the importance of this activity, this lesson stands as an example of critically reflective teaching. She had developed a critical perspective about sex-role socialization in the larger society and viewed her teaching as a force for counter-socialization. She shaped her practice in response to this broader social concern. In the post-observation conference she explained:

> When we go to the grocery store, isn't it sad that there's a million skinny ladies in your face while you're waiting in line, and their aren't any guys? Proportionally there's way more pressure on women. Why is that? That's pretty sad, and that's something that we did address. (notes, 5-29-96)

These same two themes-- interpersonal relationships and gender-- were the dominant concerns of her critical reflection during this brief student teaching placement. As well, they remained consistent features of her critical reflection throughout her full-semester student teaching placement the following fall semester. For this experience, Amy returned to the site of her first practicum (during the Methods semester). Nordville Middle School was the sole middle school serving a rural community of just over 10,000 predominantly white residents. The town was experiencing recent, rapid growth as people from the nearby city have looked to outlying areas for affordable housing. In the past six years, the

population of the community had increased almost 20% and put pressure on the school district's existing facilities. Amy took up residence in this community for the duration of her experience. She believed that isolating herself in this small town, away from the excitement of the university, would leave her lots of time, free of distractions, to focus on student teaching. In this setting, echoing the relationship-building theme of the prior semester, Amy hoped to promote "positive attitudes and relationships in the classroom" (assignment, 9-13-96).

For Amy, the concept of gender became an even more powerful analytical tool for use in making sense of her experience at Nordville. At the start of the semester, she was reading *Reviving Ophelia* (Pipher, 1994), a book she credited with further developing her sensitivity to the ways in which school practices have differential impacts according to gender. Amy pointed to the abrupt changes girls undergo in middle school. Girls tend to enter sixth grade dynamic, assertive, and willing to participate in a full range of school activities; but when they leave eighth grade they have become more passive, hesitant, and less willing to assume leadership roles. Within this first week of school, she had already seen disturbing examples of this process of change at work:

> The other day I was watching outside at recess, and all the boys are playing football, and there's like three girls that are trying to play, and then there's like thirty girls that are sitting on the sidelines, watching them. I'm like, "Do you guys want to go play ball or something? (interview, 8-31-96)

At the start of the semester, Amy talked about using her power as teacher to prop up the declining self-esteem of girls. She noted, "I can tell you that's one thing that's huge, and that I think about a lot, and I know that will affect how I interact with kids." (interview, 8-31-96). Primarily she believed she could make a difference in her personal interactions with them. As yet, she was unsure about curriculum interventions for the same purpose: "I don't know how I would do it in Geography" (interview, 8-31-96). At this point, her critical reflection about gender was a valuable part of her developing perspective about teaching, yet the quality and frequency of any critically reflective teaching resulting from such deliberation remained to be seen.

Though not overly abundant throughout the semester, there were instances of classroom practice that appeared to be informed by her critical reflection on gender. For example, during the post-observation conference of her second observation visit, Amy responded to my question about how

consideration of gender influenced her practice today. She explained that this particular group of students posed special concerns: "In this class you notice especially, there's a lot of strong girls that are very quiet" (notes, 11-5-96). Amy was sensitive to the silencing effect that several dominant male voices might have on their participation. When assigning students to cooperative groups, Amy deliberately tried to achieve combinations that would encourage female leadership. Once again she talked about her recognition of the ways in which girls are silenced by processes at work both in and outside of the classroom. In her post-observation conference comments, she claimed her inquiry into gender role construction influenced her reflection while she taught:

> I don't think I was thinking today, "I got to remember to call on a girl. I got to remember to call a boy now." I wasn't thinking that today, but I do think that some days, especially in this class, and I'm like, "Say it! Go! What do you think?" (notes, 11-5-96)

The manner in which she called on students to participate in class discussions was not the only type of critically reflective teaching evident during her full-semester student teaching placement. Critical reflection also was indicated in several of her efforts at curriculum development. For example, late in the semester, she explained that she wanted to use her teaching to help her students become "less their own world, like ethnocentric, and see more of what's happening the world, and how those things are happening other places, and they do affect them in some strange way" (interview, 12-18-96). In her third observation visit, Amy attempted to enact this view by attempting to teach the distinction between discovering a culture and encountering a culture.

In this particular class, just before she set students loose on the main part of this particular lesson, a "create a culture" activity, she spent five minutes asking students what it means to say you "discovered" some people as opposed to saying you "encountered" them. In our post-observation conference we spent close to ten minutes analyzing this period of class. We both agreed that students probably did not understand Amy's main point. In my view, it did not appear that Amy was very clear herself on what exactly the issue was. She seemed to conflate two distinct concerns-- the ethics of anthropological research on another culture and the implicit messages conveyed by the words encounter and discover. For example, in referring to the create-a-culture activity, she explained the moral responsibility of researchers:

> I tried to distinguish the difference between discovered and encountered because I think there's a sense of moral responsibility involved, and you know, you're not just going in there, and doing whatever you want to do, and taking whatever you want to take, or saying whatever you want to say. That you're actually being responsible about it, and thinking about it. (notes, 11-19-96)

Yet she also explained her intention with reference to her study of Christopher Columbus: "I had a class where we focused on Columbus and like whether or not he discovered or he encountered. And we talked about the difference between those two words. And I think that is a really important distinction" (notes, 11-19-96). Regardless of her lack of clarity on this point, I understood this instance of teaching as critically reflective because it was rooted in an awareness of moral and ethical considerations.

On another occasion, Amy demonstrated that she was coming to understand how critical reflection influences curricular decisions. At the start of the school year, she was unsure of how her curriculum choices reflect critical reflection. By the end of the semester, she spoke with greater confidence. Beyond her interactions with students, she was learning that critically reflective teaching is manifest in establishing course curricula: "I think about being a critically reflective teacher, and I'm thinking about what I'm choosing to teach in the classroom. How does it affect these kids? Does it have hidden meaning underneath by me saying that all Mexicans wear sombreros?" (interview, 12-18-96). As her Geography class moved into the study of another culture, Amy was sensitive to the hidden messages that might be conveyed in her portrayal of difference.

A final example was provided by her final journal assignment, an assignment Amy turned to a month after finishing her student teaching semester. In the span of this month she had graduated, married, and moved to the Southwest part of the country. She wrote her journal response while sitting in classrooms as a substitute teacher in a district she hoped would hire her for the coming school year. Nothing in her journal indicated that she had come to see democratic education as a defining part of her mission as a teacher. Nothing suggested that she incorporated a social reconstructionist perspective on school and society. What did come across is her critique of the teaching and learning she saw as a substitute teacher in a new place. She began:

> As I sit in Nuevo High School's Global History class, and observe students "pretending" to watch a video on Mesopotamia, I wonder what they are learning... maybe to sit quietly and pretend. If you seem interested you'll please the teacher and do well in the course. Isn't that what they want (their parents, teachers, principals) students to do well-- sit quietly, tell teachers what is right, what they want to hear? (assignment, 1-17-97)

She went on to note the reliance on textbook/worksheet teaching. Students sit bored. In a different class, a "Western Civilization" class, a class heavily populated by Mexican-American and Latino/a students, Amy wanted to know why the curriculum featured Ancient Romans, instead of topics with greater potential relevance to the students in this school She exclaimed, "They don't even talk about Mexican history! Or old civilizations here!" (assignment, 1-21-97) Amy felt the curriculum should respond to the broader social and historical conditions shaping particular school communities.

Such were her thoughts in her first school experiences after student teaching. I interpret these thoughts as critically reflective. How the last semester influenced her disposition and ability to raise these questions is difficult to say, but she did note that the experiences of the past year had helped her become more aware of the critical dimensions embedded in the questions good teachers face , and this pleased her, even if she had few answers to them. As a substitute teacher, she found herself stepping back and thinking much more "about what is being taught. Is it significant enough to be learning? If so, do the students know why?" (assignment 1-21-97). She believed she was less likely to ask such questions at the start of student teaching because then she was, in her own words, "thinking more about survival."

These examples indicate that Amy was critically reflective during her student teaching placements. Of course, she also was reflective about the technical and practical concerns beginning teachers face. Indeed, the large majority of her talk and writing about her own teaching and other school practices could be characterized as non-critical. Yet, in picking cooperative groups, intentionally calling on girls in class discussions, dealing with students breaking school rules in the hallway, striving for an open classroom environment, and catching herself as she let certain students use the pencil sharpener and not others, she was a critically reflective teacher.

Most of her critical reflection was identified as such because it met the requirements of the broad definition of critical reflection. Only on rare occasions did Amy provide evidence of reflection that met the criteria of the stricter, social reconstructionist-based definition of the term. For the most part, Amy did not appear to move any closer to incorporating the democratic education and social reconstructionist emphases of my teacher education project. Her critical reflection was framed by her

own understanding of what constituted good teaching in social studies, and this understanding did not appear grounded in democratic mission for the field or for the larger enterprise of schooling itself. Rather, her thinking about the nature of teaching was more often framed with reference to the individual's role in society than it was to creating a more just, equitable, and humane society.

Factors of Influence

This analysis revealed several factors that appeared influential in Amy's development as a critically reflective teacher. By her own assessment, raising the matter of critical reflection seemed to enhance her development. In journal assignments, return-to-campus seminars, and observation visits, I asked Amy to examine her work with reference to critically reflective teaching. In our student teacher/university supervisor relationship this semester, and in our student/Methods instructor relationship the semester before, she developed a strong sense that critical reflection was an important, if not always clear and personally meaningful, aspect of teaching social studies. Significantly, she also noted that I was the only person she's encountered in her teacher education program, in either the university or school setting, who even uses the term. She looked back to Methods' role in giving a name to the kinds of concerns that were on her mind when she began this final year of her preservice preparation. Having a name attached to the construct then led to more deliberate thinking about her teaching:

> Methods was sort of the introduction to it... [I]t was highlighted for me and then it was labeled that, and then from that I started to identify it in my head, that that's what I was doing, and then, when I identified it, then I thought about it more because I realized I was doing it... I don't think I would have ever called it that or recognized it had we never talked about it. (interview, 12-18-96)

Thus, repeatedly raising critical reflection as an important dimension of professional development during student teaching was vital for Amy. Perhaps not surprising then, one significant finding emerging from this research was the role Amy's study participation played in promoting critical reflection. In fact, Amy did not hesitate ranking her study participation as the single most important part of our work together. For Amy, the benefits of study participation were two-fold. First, she felt we got to know each other better. As previously discussed (Dinkelman, 1997), Amy felt a trusting, supportive relationship was required between us if we were going to pursue a critical teacher education project (cf.

Anning, 1988). Interviews and other discussions that took place as a result of her participation in this study provided a forum in which such a relationship could develop. Second, she claimed that the interview process helped her clarify where she stood on critically reflective issues. Every few months she had to sit down and answer difficult questions about what was important to her as a social studies teacher. Referring to the emphasis on critical reflective teaching in interviews, she explained:

> I think because we talk about this, it's kind of a special thing... I mean, you bring it up every time. And then I think about it when I go home, and I think, "Hmm, am I really being critically reflective? Am I being reflective at all? If I am, then what am I reflecting on?" (interview, 10-18-96)

In addition to the repeated focus on critical reflection, Amy pointed to other parts of the student teaching experience that helped her become more critically reflective. She noted that time spent in schools deepened her awareness of the critical dimensions of educational practices. Through student teaching, she acquired the framework of experience she lacked in Methods. As a result, she understood she had a more concrete understanding of moral and ethical concerns of practice that heretofore had existed only as abstractions. Amy also believed that journal assignments facilitated her development as a critically reflective teacher. For example, she pointed to her journal on "The Execution Class" (Olson, 1988) for the questions it raised questions concerning how she should might approach the upcoming Mexico unit. She explained:

> After reading this, I thought to myself, "he must really have a strong sense of what he wanted to accomplish as a teacher and he still didn't recognize right away that his students didn't get it." I think about my own teaching in that sense: what is my goal of a lesson? are the student's *really* getting it? how do I know? (assignment, 11-15-96, emphasis in original)

The article, journal assignment, and, to a lesser extent, seminar discussion, helped her to problematize her own teaching practices. She thought about whether her lessons had transformative effects in her students lives. She was critically reflective as she considered how she might use her own practice to help her students "start questioning our world."

Significantly, the supervision process was responsible for continuing to reassert the importance of critical reflection. The concept was not used by her cooperating teacher, nor were the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching very often explicit parts of the discussions they shared throughout the semester.

Of course, the issues they did discuss might have been mined for their critical aspects, but Amy reported that these aspects were not typically addressed in their conversations.

While different parts of the supervision experience appeared to facilitate Amy's development as a critically reflective teacher, several factors appeared to have the opposite effect. The lack of time, set both by the structure of the school day and her life outside of the classroom, stands out as one such concern. The related demands of teaching 138 students stands out as another. Throughout the semester, Amy felt tension resulting from wanting to spend more time reflecting on her practice (critical or otherwise) and finding little time to do so.

Another limiting factor was her limited depth of subject matter understanding. There were instances during the semester in which Amy indicated a desire to pursue a more critical project in her teaching, but was encumbered by gaps in her knowledge of the topic or issue at hand. For example, she knew she wanted to teach more about Mexico than its holidays, foods, and styles of dress, but she had difficulty articulating what else might be worth including. As a social studies teacher, she wrote that it was her job to teach the history, social problems, and current events of places throughout the world, and asked, "Do I have enough of what I need to do that effectively? There are sometimes that I feel like I have learned a lot and there are other times that I think I have only just begun learning" (assignment, 11-15-96). Her question draws attention to the role subject matter knowledge plays in pursuing a critical educational project in social studies. It is quite possible that teachers could see the importance of critically reflective teaching, desire to make it a part of their practice, but have difficulty doing so for lack of sufficient knowledge of their field. The ease with which she spoke about how she critically reflects on the relationship between gender and teaching, an issue she had studied in-depth, serves as a telling example of the importance of background knowledge in critical teacher education (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

FINDINGS: LEONARD

Critical Reflection and Critically Reflective Teaching

The semester before he student taught, Leonard entered Methods possessing a strong sense of critique about the conservative influence of most high schools, and this sense of critique was only

sharpened by his two practicum experiences of that semester. As he surveyed his student teaching options, Leonard was convinced he would not be happy in any of the local traditional high schools. Thus he looked to the city's alternative high school, W. E. B. DuBois City High School, for a placement. A 25 year veteran of the social studies department at that school agreed to work with Leonard and to give him full responsibility for two of her classes from the very start of the semester.

DuBois City High enrolls around 150 students. The school tends to attract students who, for a variety of reasons, have not experienced success in their "home" schools, the district's larger, traditional high schools. Students who find their way to DuBois bring a tremendous diversity of life experiences to the school. There is a wide-range of academic ability represented in the student body, with a high percentage qualifying for special education services-- services for those students identified as talented and gifted, as well as for those labeled with behavioral and emotional disorders. Some have had first-hand encounters with the criminal justice system. Some have run away from their homes. There are gay and lesbian students who felt unwelcome in other schools. The school has a higher proportion of minority students enrolled than the other high schools in the district.

The unifying thread that binds such diversity appears to be diversity itself. Posters in hallways and classrooms, comments one hears in speaking with staff, and Leonard's own description of the place send a message that difference is celebrated in this school. Indeed, a fundamental rule in effect at DuBois is a non-harassment policy which states that students can be expelled from school for harassing any other member of the school community. Community is also a term that is taken seriously. Students and teachers alike participate in making decisions of policy and procedure for the school. In this context, Leonard was given complete freedom to design and teach two courses of his choosing.

In the first interview of the semester, Leonard claimed that critical reflection was a mainstay of his personal theory of teaching. He evidenced a conceptual understanding of the term's meaning in the broad sense, and he offered a definition that distinguished critical from non-critical forms of reflection. He understood education as an enterprise that was irrevocably linked to the promotion of certain values. In his own words, he "didn't need any convincing that schools are basically an instrument of status quo conservative culture" (interview, 8-30-96). Going further, he claimed that his philosophy of teaching

reflected his philosophy of life, a philosophy that was rooted in the idea of justice, "I think the nature of justice, the search for justice, is just a basic bedrock of what I'm about" (interview, 8-30-96).

At this early point in the semester, he even offered an example from his practice that stands as an instance of critically reflective teaching. In his "Mythology, Religion, and the Search for the Sacred" course, he was struggling with how he might introduce the topic of symbolism in religious traditions. He considered having students work with art supplies to fashion religious symbols utilized in various religious traditions. Initially, he was excited about the idea, but then he caught himself. As he explained:

> We would be working with our symbols, and we would be working with our hands, and with our breed of talents. But I guess the justice factor worked itself in there when I realized that the ethics involved, of taking another person's religious symbols, and saying, "Well, I know what they are. This is a symbol..." But I'm not part of that tradition. I just thought the ethics of that were sort of shaky, so that was not something I did. (interview, 8-30-96)

His example represents an instance of thinking about teaching, and lesson planning, that takes into account moral and ethical dimensions of educational practice. In the broad sense of the term, Leonard described critically reflective teaching.

Leonard justified his curriculum building attempts by appealing to the core idea around which he constructed his identity as a teacher—student voice. In his own words, the heart of his rationale for teaching was "about empowering voices, empowering expression" (interview, 8-30-96). In this same interview, he continued to explain his developing sense of professional mission: "...[I]t starts with the idea that every person has a voice and that each voice needs to be articulated. I'd like each voice to have the opportunity to articulate their own space."

In his first journal assignment he expressed his rationale for social studies in much the same terms. The notion of student voice predominated his description, and he extended his thinking by hinting at what he hoped would happen as students find their voices:

> With that voice I wish them to speak, write and create their own articulate world view so that they may hold their own place in society without being overly influenced by all the divergent and conflicting messages current in our culture today. (assignment, 9-13-96)

In this instance, Leonard made an explicit link between his own teaching and the broader social conditions of schooling. In doing so, he hints of critical reflection that begins to incorporate social reconstructionist emphases.

Though his talk and writing demonstrated critical reflection, substantiation of the links between his expressed personal theory of teaching and his actual practice was difficult to locate. The few instances of critically reflective teaching I identified over the semester mainly related to the broad themes reflected in his course, unit, and lesson planning. For example, one class he taught, which Leonard titled "Changing Roles," was designed to examine gender identity construction and included the study of "feminist thought and history" (notes, 10-29-96).

In one sense, this entire course reflected some measure of Leonard's critical reflection. Given a free hand to teach whatever he deemed appropriate, Leonard chose to teach a class intended to have students look critically at gender roles and gender role socialization. He selected these topics out of his own personal interest and knowledge and out of his belief that gender is a fundamental category in understanding a broad sweep of social problems. Clearly his own social, political, and educational views took into account questions of justice, fairness, and equity. This outlook, as he noted, "helps me to frame the questions that I'm asking in class" (interview, 10-31-96). In other words, Leonard was in the habit of interpreting social phenomena critically, and so it was only natural that he should approach curriculum in the same way. Concerns for the moral and ethical dimensions of living so permeated Leonard's thinking about life that they could not help but permeate his approach to teaching in some manner. In this overarching sense then, Leonard's plan for an entire course devoted to gender represents critically reflective teaching.

However, with respect to the more specific, contextualized decisions he made about daily practice, critically reflective teaching was not as readily apparent. Simply put, the corpus of data gathered during Leonard's student teaching semester provided limited insight into how, or even whether, Leonard's critical reflection influenced his practice. When moving from talking about the general aims of his classes to the particular objectives of individual lesson plans, Leonard's discourse became far more utilitarian. For example, Leonard had difficulty explaining how he determined, on a day-by-day basis, which topics he chose to present to students. For Leonard, the process of daily lesson planning appeared to be determined by the availability of resources and his own knowledge. As Leonard put the matter, a key factor in designing daily lesson plans is "whatever I can find in the library, the LMC, the

IMC, the Memorial, the card catalogues" (interview, 10-31-96). As well, he explained that his own interests and knowledge are determining factors: "You teach what you know, and you teach what you want to know" (interview, 10-31-96). To these factors, he later added that his students play a role in setting the curriculum by the interest they show for some ideas and not others. Nothing in his explanation suggested that his curriculum choices are grounded in consideration of moral/ethical or social/political concerns. At some level, Leonard may have reflected on such concerns. That is, he implicitly may have assumed, but did not voice, such thinking. Yet I collected no data to support this possibility.

Throughout the semester, the better part of our work together placed critically reflective concerns on the periphery. The center of our attention usually was centered on Leonard's frustration with the failure of his lessons to promote meaningful academic engagement. Leonard was surprised by the amount of structuring, planning, and scaffolding required to make lessons successful:

> I thought that all you had to do was apply some group building exercises, and sort of an alternative view, and more collegiality, and it would sort of just fall into place. There would be this cooperation, and people would realize what was going on, and they'd say, "Wow! This is great." And I realize that it's not really, it doesn't happen. (interview, 10-31-96)

Nearly all of our post-observation conferences were conducted as discussions of technical and practical matters of effective pedagogy, such as techniques to encourage more widespread participation in class discussions, classroom management approaches, and strategies for structuring small-group activities. Granted, critical dimensions are embedded in each of these concerns. Yet our observation discussions rarely explored such issues, nor did Leonard address the critical aspects of these more practical concerns in his journal assignments or interviews.

An exception to this rule came in the conversation we shared following his final observation visit. Leonard began this particular "Stories Worth Telling" class by inviting students to participate in the "react game," a game requiring students to act out their reactions to various situations described by Leonard. For example, Leonard might say to a student, "You are in a stalled car on train tracks, and a train is speeding toward you at 60 miles an hour! React!" To say the least, few students were eager to participate. One student protested, "I don't feel like playing this fucking game" (notes, 12-17-96). Nevertheless, Leonard persisted and managed to get several students to react, including a few who gave

spirited performances. Following this fifteen minute activity, Leonard split students into pairs to work through a list of words they were supposed to read to each other while conveying different emotional states. Here too, participation was varied among the groups. Leonard faced an uphill battle as he walked from group to group, attempting to keep students on task. To end the class, one student volunteered to read a story he planned to submit as one of the six stories Leonard assigned for the quarter. The student proceeded to read verbatim a brief biography of rap artist Tupac Shakur that he merely had downloaded and printed from the internet. After he finished reading, a brief discussion ensued regarding whether or not Tupac Shakur was actually dead. Then the hour was over.

Leonard's frustration with the lesson was obvious in the post-observation conference. His comments indicated that his frustration extended beyond this lesson. This class did not go as he wanted, and worse, Leonard felt that what transpired today was indicative of how the rest of the quarter had gone in this class. As he noted, "This lesson is a mini-survey of the course in many ways" (notes, 12-17-96). Looking beyond his dissatisfaction with this particular lesson, Leonard used this conference to vent his frustration with his efforts to bring any degree of academic rigor to his courses. He continued, "I'm confused about what I'm doing here. I feel like I've fulfilled my destiny. I've aimed at nothing and hit it every time. I wanted to do so much more."

He spoke about his difficulties teaching particular students. He detailed the numerous obstacles posed by this alternative school setting. These obstacles included what he described as "messed up" parents, his perception that "most kids in this school are on something," "80% of these kids have labels," the fact that students sit on couches rather than at desks, that many of the students enrolled in his cooperating teacher's classes are new to DuBois and are unaccustomed to the norms of the school, and the list continued. Leonard lamented that many of his students do not come from "anything close to being a stable household," nor do they "have the idea that education is important." He had difficulty getting many students to do any work, let alone high-quality work. I challenged Leonard to unpack the assumptions embedded in this list of concerns, and the result was a sustained period of discussion about critically reflective issues.

Clearly Leonard wished to use our conversation to help him make sense of his frustration, and critical reflection was apparent in much of what he had to say. As we talked about the problems many of his students face, we constantly returned to the question of the mission of DuBois. What is in the best interest of these students? Where does academic achievement fit into the aims of this school? As Leonard asked:

> Is excellent school work what this school's about? I don't think that's what it's about. It's really about saving these kids until they start making adult decisions... The difficulty of teaching in this school is, on the one hand, wanting more effort and more excellence and more thought, and on the other hand is not making it too demanding...I don't want to set up this system where they fail. (notes, 12-17-96)

Leonard was torn between the recognition that his classes did not push his students academically and his growing understanding that academic achievement was not the primary mission DuBois served. He explained:

> It's an ethical dilemma but it's not the academic that's working here, it's the interpersonal...In some ways, fuck the academic. Just keep them here and keep them from getting killed. And keep them in a place where they have a chance to make good decisions for themselves... As I say that, I believe that, and I like that, but it's frustrating as well... (notes, 12-17-96)

Such comments were typical of our discussion. If Leonard did not directly address moral and ethical considerations, he appeared to realize that such concerns existed just below the surface in this conference.

Yet when Leonard's focus moved from the macro-issues of aims and purposes of education to the more micro-issues of daily practice, critical reflection became less apparent. At the same time that Leonard struggled to find strategies that might help him achieve more success in promoting academic achievement, practical issues came to the fore. Commenting on his tenure at DuBois, he noted, "In this setting, there's too many things to think about as a student teacher. The academic part is way down the line. I'm mostly thinking about what am I going to do? What are my lesson plans going to be?" (notes, 12-17-96). If anything, survival, and making it through the next day, seemed to be more of a driving concern than critical reflection about teaching. Given how he talked about his experiences, my sense was that critical reflection probably played some role in deciding what and how to teach. However, the nature of this role remained obscure at the end of his student teaching experience.

In comparison to the experiences Amy had in her student teaching semester, Leonard represents an interesting case. Leonard both began and ended the semester articulating a sense of mission that seemed to incorporate a relatively thorough understanding of the moral and ethical foundations of teaching. He spoke of the connections between schooling and the larger social order in ways that Amy did not. For example, while Leonard never fully adopted a social reconstructionist posture as a teacher, by the end of the semester, his thoughts on the roles teachers play in society did seem to move in that direction. As he commented in the final interview:

> Teacher and the school must be deliberate in the goal... It's the one best opportunity. You've got kids in school and school is supposed to reflect the notions of the community and some of the notions of community, even in the worst of times, are always justice. (interview, 1-21-97)

With his early ideas about how schools promote "status quo conservative culture" and his semester-ending ideas about schools as a force for justice, one might have expected Leonard's student teaching semester to yield abundant examples of critically reflective teaching. Yet such was not the case. In general, Leonard's struggle to find ways of bringing about academic engagement in his classes overshadowed his thinking about democracy and social justice. On the other hand, Amy, who was not as explicit about the relationship between schooling and the larger society, provided comparatively clearer and more abundant examples of critical reflection.

Factors of Influence

Even though I detected limited examples of Leonard's critically reflective teaching, Leonard provided numerous insights into those aspects of the student teaching semester that encouraged his critical reflection. In the final interview, he estimated that my work as his supervisor accounted for "a third" of his development as a critically reflective teacher, a share that equaled his cooperating teacher's contribution (interview 1-21-97). Throughout the semester, Leonard was quite clear about what he thought we should be working on as he developed his teaching skills, and critical reflection was not high on his list of priorities.

The low priority he assigned to critically reflective concerns was due in large part to the difficulties he experienced in the classroom. Yet another explanation stems from Leonard's belief that

he had the critically reflective part of his teaching already figured out. He pointed to his work as a pastor in suggesting that critical reflection has been a long-standing component of his thinking:

> That's what I've been doing for years and years. That's what I was doing as a pastor-- trying to get all the voices out, trying to encourage people to find their own voice... So for me it was sort of transferring over a personal philosophy to education from another dimension. So it's not really something I think that much about. (interview, 10-31-96)

Leonard saw himself as a critically reflective person and, as if by default, a critically reflective teacher too.

Interestingly, Leonard further hinted that teaching at DuBois, an alternative school setting in which so many students are dealing with such wide ranging and serious concerns, made critical reflection *less* a factor in his thinking. As he stated, "So I don't even, I'm not thinking of it that much. Again, the supportive atmosphere at DuBois maybe make it, you know, less necessary" (interview, 10-31-96). He felt the environment at DuBois was so imbued with critical reflection that he needed little encouragement from his supervisor to consider the moral, ethical, and social dimensions of educational practice. He was more interested in learning instructional practices that would help him find ways to demand more from his students.

In looking back on his first half of the student teaching semester, Leonard judged that critically reflective teaching was not his most immediate interest, especially not in the context of the supervision process. As he saw the matter, our work together over this semester was not really about the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching. Instead, he claimed, "I think it's mostly the how-to, the nuts and bolts. It's not that you're not pushing maybe on the critical part, but I guess I'm pushing myself on that, as far as I know" (interview, 10-31-96). Again, Leonard did not see critical reflection as an area of his developing practice that required much attention. His comments at the end of the semester echoed this assessment.

Though Leonard recognized that the critical dimensions of teaching and learning did not claim the most prominent position on our working agenda, he did value that they were made an explicit part of the supervision experience. He also appreciated the manner in which I pushed him to clarify what he initially thought was an already well-constructed rationale for his teaching. He explained:

> I thought as far as my mission goes, I had a strong basis already. I knew what my mission was...You wouldn't allow me to just say, "Oh, that's a good idea Leonard." How do you actually put it into practice? Back to that democratic education, you know, fine, you like to have every boy sing in the choir, but how do you get them tuned up? (interview, 1-21-97)

The supervision process appeared successful in pushing Leonard to think more deeply about the underlying purposes driving his instruction. He was challenged to further develop the notion that "everyone has a voice."

Leonard felt comfortable in rank-ordering the various parts of the supervision process in terms of their importance to his development as a critically reflective teacher. From most to least important, Leonard listed journal assignments, study participation, return to campus seminars, and observation visits. As in Amy's case, the significance of study participation stands out as an unintended, yet forceful factor among the various components planned for the semester. Leonard described the value of having to sit down and answer difficult questions about his teaching:

> Well, I think I had to think more about what critically reflective teaching has been vis-a-vis our conversations and you're pressing me for more precise answers all the time, so that I finally came to realize that justice, and the teaching of justice, and keeping, looking on what is just, what is, where has injustice happened, and where is it happening now, goes so much within this whole critical dimension. (interview, 1-21-97)

The interview meetings, including the actual interviews as well as the conversation before and after, helped Leonard clarify his stance on issues he might not have been challenged to think about as a non-participant in this study. About the critical dimensions of teaching, Leonard stated, "You've influenced me a great deal on these because it's been a matter of writing and of speaking on these topics, and keep coming back to them, and it refines it. It narrows it down" (interview, 1-21-97). Ironically, return-to-campus seminars, designed as a principle venue for raising critically reflective concerns, were ranked as least important. Even more striking, these conferences were planned to coincide with what Leonard ranked as most important-- journal assignments. Apparently, writing his thoughts was more helpful than speaking them in a classroom setting among his peers.

Much as in Amy's case, Leonard's cooperating teacher played an important role in his professional development, but her impact was less felt with regard to his development as a critically reflective teacher. By his account, most of the discussion they shared concerned decisions Leonard made in dealing with individual students. In looking back on the kinds of issues they discussed, Leonard

noted, "Mostly it was student related. What strategies to use with students, like what do I do right now" (interview, 1-21-97). Again, there is no question that critical concerns are embedded in "strategies to use with students," but Leonard did not provide indication that such concerns were prominent features of discussions with his cooperating teacher. Throughout the semester, the main emphasis on critical reflection was featured in the relationship we had as student teacher and supervisor (and researcher).

The primary obstacle Leonard faced in developing his thinking about the critical dimensions of teaching related to the difficulty he faced in planning and teaching classes that yielded substantive academic engagement. The immediacy of his classroom difficulties meant that Leonard's focus was on converting his idea of "everyone has a voice" into real teaching and learning experiences. His difficulty directed our attention more toward practical than critical issues. As a result, we had fewer opportunities to explore critically reflective issues.

FINDINGS: NICK

Critical Reflection and Critically Reflective Teaching

More than either of the two other study participants, Nick appeared to have entered his student teaching experiences with a coherent and developed personal theory of teaching. This theory was integrated within an encompassing moral philosophy which Nick once referred to as his "life view." Neither his educational theory nor his life philosophy were new to me as he began student teaching, since he had articulated these thoroughly and consistently throughout the Methods semester. These views, encompassing fundamental moral and ethical questions, shaped the content and quality of Nick's critical reflection during both of his student teaching experiences. Essentially, the story of Nick's critical reflection is the story of his struggle to reconcile these views with the reality of classroom teaching.

In supervising Nick's half- and full-semester student teaching placements, I observed his teaching on six different occasions in two very different settings. For his half-semester experience, at Prairie Hill Middle School, a small town (though becoming more suburban), overcrowded middle school located a short drive from the city, Nick was given responsibility for teaching only six days during the eight and a

half week placement. As Nick described, his cooperating teacher, a veteran teacher of more than 30 years, taught "by the book," was authoritarian, and emphasized content coverage.

In this context, Nick's six days of teaching came the last week of the school year. The two observations I conducted in this short time gave an indication of how Nick's critically reflective stance would influence his teaching. At the core of his personal theory of education was the idea that every individual has an inherent capacity for growth in understanding of one's self and one's relation to the world. The educator's role was to create the conditions in which this capacity would be realized. This represented the essence of what he termed his "vision" for his work as a teacher. His teaching was in the service of the "actualization of potential" (interview, 1-22-96), his own as well as his students. This vision of best practice was steeped in moral and ethical considerations and was thus critically reflective.

At Prairie Hill, Nick's first attempt at teaching demonstrated the relationship between his instruction and the perceived tenets of his personal theory of teaching. All six days were taken up by an Inuit Survival simulation of his own design. Rather than teaching the facts of Canadian geography, he planned a unit that he believed would lead students to a better understanding of themselves and their place in the world via a role-play of Inuit culture.

Though the lessons failed to produce much rational deliberation among his students, Nick reflected back on them and pronounced them a success. He explained, "When I say I'm pleased, it's because my goal as a teacher is to build a trust, building a sense of students coming up with their own answers, and I see that as building over time" (notes 5-24-96). His theory of learning laid out trust as a precondition that must be established prior to pushing students to think critically. He continued, "When you build that trust, they're willing to take risks, and they're willing to express themselves. And then you can go into their thinking. You have to build dialogue, and that's how you get people thinking." After seven weeks of observing classes in which student voices were not encouraged, in which the prevailing norm for students was sitting quietly and listening, Nick was proud of what he accomplished with these lessons. He understood the moral dimensions of teaching and interpreted these particular lessons with this understanding in mind

His final words to his students at the end of the second observation (also his last day at this placement) give further insight into his critically reflective practice. Nick attempted to leave students with a sense of what he was trying to accomplish in these past six days, and his words are a clear statement of his mission as a teacher. He urged them to "unravel the confusion of your own nature" (notes, 5-24-96). He advised them to be skeptical of people who proclaim to have the answers to the problems besetting society. He concluded:

> I talked about the transmission of values in this society. I am telling you that I think that this society does not have the answers that will solve the violence and the hate. It is up to you to make this world a better place. It is up to you to understand yourselves and the world in order to change it. Not so you can be happy, but so you can contribute to the world without violence, greed, and all that is ugly. Thank you for being you, and sharing who you are with me. (notes, 5-24-96)

Though my impression was that, in the noise and tumult of the hour's end, few students listened closely to Nick, this moment stands as an example of critically reflective teaching as broadly characterized for this study. Moreover, by looking to a vision of a different world, the statement hints at the more strict, social reconstructionist sense of the term.

This same attention to the practical realization of his personal theory of education continued into his full semester placement. Much like Leonard, Nick's practicum experiences during the Methods semester were enough to convince him that he wanted to student teach in an alternative setting. The right kind of learning environment was essential to Nick's vision of successful schools, and the mass-production schools he witnessed in his Methods field experiences represented the antithesis of this vision. He feared teaching in such schools would leave him "corrupted or disillusioned in a way" (interview, 9-1-96). Given the reality of what he saw, he did not leave his student teaching placement up to chance. He sought out his own and ended up in the same alternative high school as Leonard--DuBois City High School.

His cooperating teacher gave Nick complete charge of one class, and they team-taught a second. Nick titled this first class "Philosophical Conceptions of Good and Evil." The curriculum of this class consisted of "going over different conceptions of good and evil, some religious, some philosophical, and also some scientific, psychologically influenced ideas of good and evil" (interview, 9-1-96). The second class, in which his cooperating teacher shouldered most of the responsibility for curriculum

development, was called "Tai Chi and Meditation" and was an introduction to Tai Chi and different aspects of Chinese culture, especially Taoism and Buddhism.

In his four observations in this setting, Nick's critically reflective teaching was so deemed for the manner in which he related classroom practice to his fundamental purpose. His personal theory of teaching was evident in his analysis of his work. Compared to the standard set by Amy and Leonard, Nick's post-observation conferences more often were characterized by discourse concerning critically reflective matters. Discussion of technical and practical concerns still held sway in these conferences, but critical discourse was notably present. As well, Nick's study interviews, journals, and comments in return-to-campus seminars yielded a rich set of examples of his critical reflection.

His reflection on his second observation visit is representative of the nature of the critical reflection I observed throughout the semester. In this class, Nick and the fifteen students in this class were just beginning a short unit on, as he described, "Joseph Campbell, mythology, and the conception of the good as an interconnected whole" (notes, 9-26-96). Nick's lesson plan involved two readings, one a segment of an interview with Joseph Campbell, and the other a text featuring a speech alleged to have been spoken by the Duwamish Indian Chief Seattle. Nick had students read these aloud in class and write individual responses. Then students broke into small groups to share their responses and discuss the readings. Both Nick and I saw the lesson as more successful in some respects and less so in others. Students worked well together in small groups, but generally failed to engage the ideas embedded in the readings at anything other than a superficial level.

Regardless of the lesson's outcome, Nick's critically reflective approach to teaching was apparent. Nick claimed he designed this lesson bearing in mind his underlying rationale for teaching, a rationale that encompassed moral dimensions. Two weeks earlier, he had expressed this rationale in a series of related aims: "treating other people as whole human beings, struggling to make sense of the world....understanding ourselves and our place and responsibility in this world... [and] understanding the other, and helping the other" (assignment, 9-13-96). Most (approximately 2/3) our post-observation conference focused on more technical and practical concerns of ways in which this lesson could have

encouraged more substantive engagement with the academic themes of this lesson, but the final third addressed how these fundamental aims were advanced by this particular class.

Nick was able to explain how various parts of his lesson encompassed his rationale for his practice. This is of no small importance. While it may be possible to discern aspects of a lesson that reflect ideas such as community, respect for diversity, and teaching for self-understanding, these aspects are not strong evidence of critical reflective teaching unless the teacher demonstrates that they were intentional. By definition, critically reflective teaching is never serendipity.

In this instance, Nick felt the struggle his students experienced while working in groups was the most valuable part of the lesson for the ways in which it encouraged community-building and an atmosphere of trust. The academic shortcomings of the lesson were less important than Nick's perception that the class fostered a sense of community through student interaction. As he noted several weeks earlier, "I focus on community and on inter-relationships and that type of thing... Is this going to help people to understand how they get along with others, or to know themselves? (interview, 10-25-96). In his own terms, Nick evidenced critical reflection and critically reflective teaching.

Observation visits were not the only setting in which Nick's critical reflection was apparent. His journal assignments and return-to-campus seminar participation also provided numerous insights. For example, Nick was invited to return to the Methods syllabus of the prior semester and choose a single text to reread for his fourth journal assignment. As did Leonard, Nick selected "The Futility of Trying to Teach Everything of Importance" (Wiggins, 1989) from the forty-plus readings. The journal assignment gave student teachers a good deal of freedom to respond as they saw fit. Leonard wrote on his inability to bring structure and focus to his courses, and my analysis of his writing revealed little critical reflection. Nick also discussed the same difficulty, but he extended his analysis further.

Once again, his critical reflection bore the stamp of his world view. He began by agreeing with Wiggins' idea that the school's purpose should rest in the development of certain habits of mind. Yet Nick questioned whether this is an achievable goal in schools that have not undergone building-wide and fundamental reform. Nick explained, "Exposing students to one class geared towards this objective is certainly helpful, but it pales in comparison to a school who's [sic] purpose it is to pass on these habits"

(assignment, 12-13-96). In part, Nick believed teaching habits of mind in a single classroom is difficult due to the broader social conditions of schooling. He noted, "We live in a crazy society, and our schools reflect that society. And we're thrown in there" (notes, 12-13-96).

Regardless of whether the entire school was directed toward a common goal, he argued his own teaching was most effective when it took place working individually with students, and his challenge was to carry on this work "... in a way that is not de-humanizing" (assignment, 12-13-96). Here Nick looks at his practice with a sensitivity to its moral dimensions. He noted the fragility of many of his students, students who have been harmed by their past experiences in schools and with those in authority. He continued:

> There have been a number of times, for example, that I have had students crying, or close to crying, after what appeared, from my perspective to be a very engaged and active discussion of ideas... Needless to say, my awareness of the implications of my actions has grown tremendously. (assignment, 12-13-96)

Nick admitted he had few answers to the problem of teaching "habits of mind" to students who appeared to be dealing with weightier concerns. He held many of Wiggins' ideas in high regard, but he also noted that "I do not want to do any harm to students in my care" (assignment, 12-13-96). Again, he sees that the consequences of educational practice raise moral and ethical questions. What emerges from this journal is Nick's rich understanding of the moral and ethical dimensions of education. As such, his journal provided further evidence of his critical reflection.

There is no question that Nick was deliberative about the moral and ethical dimensions of education and that his teaching was informed by this reflection. Thus he was critically reflective in the broad sense of the term. Yet, does his critical reflection meet the more strict, social reconstructionist definition of the term? The answer is a qualified yes. Nick was deliberate about wider social, historical, political, and cultural contexts of education. He also thought about the construction of a more just and democratic society. However, he folded these themes into the language and ideas of his own educational and personal philosophy. In doing so, he shifted his emphasis from the outside world to the individual student. Nick fully understood that schools play a role in shaping society, but his focus was less on shaping society than it was shaping individuals. He explained:

> It's hard for me to say I want to make a difference. I struggled with that idea. I'm always drawn to these kids... and I seem to have some sort of compassion or understanding of them, and if that is trying to make a difference, I guess it is. Wanting to enter into their lives and form a relationship... ultimately that's making a difference, but I'm not an activist in that sense, in saying, "I'm doing this to make a difference." (interview, 1-24-97)

Nick was quite capable of explaining how his teaching my shape the future social order, but his doing so was somewhat artificial. In fact, he went out of the way to distance himself from a more explicitly political project:

> I don't think it's my role as a teacher, it may never be my role as a teacher, to teach about the things that are going on in society that aren't right, that doesn't seem to be fair, in the sense of, how come the rich are always getting the tax breaks, and that type of thing. (interview, 5-1-96)

He felt such teachers were needed in schools. They would compliment his own teaching, but his strengths and interests lay elsewhere. His mission was to help students "awaken to the reality around them" (interview, 5-1-96).

Similarly, Nick developed a conception of democratic education that incorporated the values he held at the beginning of the semester. In turn, Nick felt more comfortable in interpreting his own teaching as a form of democratic education. He noted, "Ultimately, I think democracy rests in the ability or willingness to enter into a relationship with each other, to form a network of relationships" (interview, 1-24-97). Democratic education took on meaning for Nick in ways that it did not for Amy and Leonard.

Factors of Influence

Throughout the semester, Nick addressed factors that he believed encouraged his development as a critically reflective teacher. Twice during the semester, I asked him to reflect on those aspects of the supervision experience for the manner in which they encouraged him to think about critically reflective concerns. When asked to rank order the various aspects of supervision in terms of their influence on his critical reflection, Nick produced the same list in both interviews: (in descending order of importance) journal assignments, study participation, observation visits, peer observations, and return-to-campus seminars. Overall, Nick appreciated the emphasis on critical reflection I brought to his student teaching experience. He believed this emphasis, in the context of his placement at DuBois, led to the refinement (though not a transformation) of his already established personal theory of education.

Journal assignments were most helpful because they provided a forum for Nick to explore his ideas about teaching in relation to his philosophy of living. The discourse Nick employed in writing his journals stood apart from the language used by Amy and Leonard. Nick used his journals to pursue the intermingling ideas of the reading assignments and his own psychological and spiritual theories of individual understanding and growth. Of course, his participation in this study, with the attendant set of interviews and conversations, also served the same purpose. The journals and his study participation required Nick to periodically step back from the demands of teaching and reflect on critical dimensions of his practice.

Beyond these two components, Nick noticed considerably less emphasis on critical reflection. He believed our observation conferences tended to focus on important, but more practical, concerns. He claimed our work together during observations helped him consider questions such as "... what are you doing now, this lesson? Is this lesson going to teach what you wanted to teach? Are they going to get what you want?" (interview, 1-24-97) Peer observations were of limited value, perhaps because there were only two during the whole semester. Like Amy and Leonard, Nick ranked return-to-campus seminars, a part of the supervision experience explicitly focused on raising critically reflective issues, as least helpful.

Finally, Nick also pointed out that the attention to critically reflective matters during this semester originated from his University Supervisor. Nick noted that his cooperating teacher was "...just a good person to have around, you know to engage with, to discuss things with, to provide support, you know to back me up kind of thing. He really, he mostly stood and let me did, let me struggle with it, and experience successes and failures" (interview, 1-24-97). His cooperating teacher and I served different purposes for Nick. Far from feeling torn between our disparate approaches to teacher education, Nick felt our work with him was complimentary.

DISCUSSION

Critical Reflection and Critically Reflective Teaching

The differences among the student teaching experiences of Amy, Leonard, and Nick make it difficult to provide a single, comprehensive answer to my first research question -- What was the extent

and nature of the critical reflection and critically reflective teaching evident among three preservice teachers in student teaching semester of a research university secondary social studies teacher education program? Yet the study's focus on critical reflection and critically reflective teaching provides a common reference around which to organize a discussion of all three cases.

A starting point is the critical reflection I observed over the semester. As in the methods semester, all three study participants provided evidence that they were critically reflective about teaching. The content of such reflection varied in each case. For example, Amy considered the gender dynamics embedded in her teaching and other school practices. Leonard reflected on the proper aims of his school. Nick considered his students' responsibility to the classroom community. Again, as in the methods semester, critical reflection was far from their predominant form of thinking. There was far more consideration of the practical concerns of teaching, but critical reflection was apparent nevertheless. That they were at times critically reflective, and moreover, that they considered such thinking central to the work of teaching counters notions about preservice teachers' unwillingness or inability to consider moral and ethical dimensions of educational practice. In light of the widely held view that critical reflection may be beyond the pale of a preservice teachers' capabilities (Calderhead & Gates, 1993; Hatton & Smith, 1994), the presence of critical reflection in these cases is of no small consequence. The numerous examples I collected over the semester give some reason to believe that critical reflection might be profitably pursued as an aim of preservice teacher education.

The continuation of their critical reflection across semesters is also encouraging. The concept of critically reflective teaching was new to all three students at the start of Methods. Over that semester, however, they acquired a conceptual understanding of the term, claimed it represented a valued aspect of how they understood teaching, and demonstrated in their practica assignments that they could use the idea to interpret professional practice (Dinkelman, 1997). Heading into the student teaching semester, it was not apparent that critically reflective teaching would continue to be an important feature of their practical theories of teaching. The results of this study suggest that it did. This particular emphasis of the methods semester appeared to carry forward into the student teaching semester. Their experiences stand out even more when one considers that all three study participants indicated that their

cooperating teachers were not especially helpful in encouraging them to reflect on the moral and ethical dimensions of educational practice. Throughout both their methods and student teaching semesters, their motivation to critically reflect seemed to result in part from my efforts to draw consistent attention to critically reflective issues.

Of course, a legitimate challenge to these encouraging findings might be raised on the grounds that the small amount of critical reflection documented during this semester is hardly cause for optimism. Afterall, critical reflection was far from the main concern of these beginning teachers. For example, a number of the post-observation conferences featured no discourse about critically reflective concerns at all. How much critical reflection is enough? What can teacher educators reasonably expect from beginning teachers? Is there an optimal standard for what part of a teacher's reflection should be critical? Certainly these questions will not be answered in general terms, for answers to such questions inevitably are bound to particular teaching contexts. Furthermore, every conception of critical reflection assumes some notion of good teaching. Thus teacher educators must employ their own practical theories of teaching to settle these issues within the settings of their own programs. With regard to the setting featured in this research, my point here is not to suggest that these preservice teachers were or were not critically reflective enough. Rather, I argue that the critical reflection I observed indicates their capacity and willingness to consider the moral and ethical dimension of their practice.

The design of this study was intended to allow an investigation of the manner in which critical reflection led to critically reflective teaching. Would student teachers who express critical perspectives on teaching and schooling demonstrate classroom practices that incorporated these views? Though evidence of critical reflection was uncovered, far less was learned about the ways in which such thinking influenced the practice of these three student teachers. They rarely used moral and ethical terms to justify their decisions about what and how to teach. Even less is certain about any relationship between their teaching practices and critical reflection in the strict sense of the term. Examples were found but limited. For instance, Amy was conscious of how often she called on girls. Leonard included gender stereotypes in his curriculum partially out of his own interest in the subject but also because of his

concern for social justice. Nick chose to teach in ways that he believed would inspire a sense of community. Yet the lack of such examples constrained the possibilities for learning about how, or even whether, critical reflection influenced a broad range of the many instructional decisions each beginning teacher made on a daily basis. There very well may have been an influence, but such was not uncovered by the data collection and analysis procedures of this study.

Significantly, Amy, Leonard, and Nick each maintained the reform-oriented posture on effective pedagogy that they expressed during Methods. All three spoke of their desire to go beyond the content coverage emphasis so typical of contemporary social studies classrooms, and their practice reflected this desire. Their lesson plans were often designed to actively involve students in class discussions and activities, even if they were not always successful in this regard. Their stances as reform agents, established (or at least demonstrated) in Methods, carried forward throughout their student teaching semesters. The idea of active student engagement, featured in the definition of good teaching utilized in our work together (i.e. active student engagement in worthwhile learning), appeared to capture what they were trying to accomplish in their classes.

Yet the other half of this definition emphasized worthwhile learning. How were they deciding what constituted worthwhile learning? The answer to this question was never entirely clear. The participants themselves had difficulty articulating the basis upon which such decisions were made. Amy and Leonard, for example, talked about the availability of resources and teaching materials in deciding what to include in their curricula. Compared to Amy and Leonard, Nick seemed to have an easier time defending his lessons in terms of a personally-held sense of mission, but he tended to draw on his own subject-matter interests in setting and analyzing his curriculum. On occasion, all participants spoke or wrote about the relationship between their practice and some moral and ethical foundation. Less evident, however, was a coherent rationale supporting their teaching decisions. Based on the experience of these three student teachers, reform-oriented teacher education suggests two challenges of varying difficulty. The first and easier challenge is getting preservice teachers to see that good teaching involves leading students to become active and involved participants in the learning process. The more difficult task is encouraging the development of a sense of purpose that enables beginning teachers to

discriminate more from less worthwhile learning. Accomplishing the former task without the latter could lead preservice teachers to believe that any instance of teaching reflects best practice as long as it engages students.

Social Reconstructionism and Democratic Education

In the methods semester, it did not appear that the emphasis on social reconstructionism and democratic education had much impact on the thinking of the three study participants. In the student teaching semester, a slightly different picture emerged. For the most part, their critical reflection continued its inattention to wider social, historical, political, and cultural contexts of education. However, each participant provided varying amounts of evidence of reflection on the construction of a more equitable, just, and democratic society. Of the three, Amy seemed least influenced by such concerns. At various times in interviews, assignments, and return-to-campus seminars, Leonard extended his notion of democratic education beyond the idea that "every student has a voice" and expressed that "teaching for justice is the starting and ending point of teaching." Nick's reflection on his practice appeared to embody an even stronger relationship to democratic education. His teaching was shaped by an educational philosophy that focused on individual growth and understanding. Though he was not driven by a desire to democratize society, he understood that his influence on individuals also would affect the larger social order, and he talked and wrote about these influences utilizing democratic discourse. Altogether the student teaching semester indicated more critical reflection in the strict sense of the term than did the methods semester.

How can this difference be accounted for, however slight? One explanation may relate to the continued emphasis on critical reflection found in supervision practices. Journal assignments and return-to-campus seminars yielded further opportunities for Amy, Leonard, and Nick to consider critically reflective dimensions of school practice. What were new and perplexing ideas in the rush of the prior semester may have come to make greater sense over a longer time period. Also, their participation in another semester of this study could account for differences. More specifically, the semester meant three more interviews in which they were asked to step back from their work and reconsider difficult questions regarding social reconstructionism and democratic education. The experience they gained in

schools may be a third factor in their increased reflection on democratic issues. Considering that Methods' field experiences were important in establishing a real-life context for their critical reflection in the previous semester, one might suspect that the intense nature of their student teaching semester would have an even more profound effect.

Factors of Influence

This analysis identifies several factors that appeared to influence the study participants' critical reflection during the student teaching semester. Amy, Leonard, and Nick were fairly uniform in their assessments of which aspects of the supervision process were most helpful for encouraging their critical reflection. They each were asked to rank these in the final interview. Though not a planned component of the supervision process, I asked them to consider study participation as a factor of influence. Of course, it was difficult for Amy, Leonard, and Nick to separate study participation from the supervision process, since they experienced both concurrently. Yet each provided lists that varied little over the course of the semester. Table 1 summarizes their rankings.

Table 1

Factors of influence during the student teaching semester

Amy	Leonard	Nick
Study Participation	Journal Assignments	Journal Assignments
Journal Assignments	Study Participation	Study Participation
Observation Visits	Observation Visits	Observation Visits
Peer Observations	Peer Observations	Peer Observations
Return-to-Campus Seminars	Return-to-Campus Seminars	Return-to-Campus Seminars

Journal assignments appeared to have worked as intended. Not only did the study participants rank them as important, but numerous examples of critical reflection were identified in their pages. Both Leonard and Nick claimed that journals prompted their thoughtful examination of critical issues they cared about but may not have addressed without a written assignment. Though unintended, Amy,

Leonard, and Nick felt they were encouraged to consider critical dimensions of teaching every time they gave an interview. For Amy, study participation was helpful for more than periodically raising issues concerning critical reflection and democratic education; it also provided us a continued opportunity to build a trusting relationship. She claimed such a relationship was necessary for her to discuss critically reflective issues. Observation visits were seen as important, even though predominated by non-critical discourse. Apparently, study participants were impressed by the limited instances in which critically reflective issues were raised during observations.

Amy, Leonard, and Nick were less impressed by peer observations and return-to-campus seminars. By their reports, these two components were much less influential in encouraging their critical reflection than were the other three. Peer observations may have fared poorly because only two were required and the written part of this assignment did not explicitly direct attention to critically reflective teaching. However, the low ranking of return-to-campus seminars is less easily explained. Along with journal assignments, they were intended as places where the critical dimensions of teaching would be raised and discussed. Occurring during the school day, maybe they saw return-to-campus seminars as an interruption of their teaching. The participants' experiences raise questions regarding how return-to-campus seminars might be used as a means to promote critical reflection.

This research supports the view that the technical and practical demands of first learning to teach results in the dominance of non-critical forms of reflection. In a sense, inexperience surfaces as an influential factor in supporting or impeding the development of critically reflective preservice teachers. For example, when Leonard found that teaching required more than just "group building exercises, an alternative view, and more collegiality," he began a semester-long effort to figure out how to bring structure, focus, and coherent organization to his lessons. This effort became the topic of our post-observation conferences and occupied significant portions of his journals. Though he still was critically reflective during the semester, his struggle in the classroom was clearly his first concern. Similarly, Amy was overwhelmed by how much time teaching took. She wanted to write more about her experiences throughout the semester and take more time to reflect on her teaching. Yet until she learned to manage the work of teaching in less time, she believed critical concerns would remain unattended. Clearly, the

technical and practical concerns of beginning teachers must be taken into account in attempts to promote critical reflection.

One notable finding concerned the study participants' interpretations of the role I played as their university supervisor, especially in comparison to the role played by their cooperating teachers. All three spoke highly of their cooperating teachers and saw them as important models. None of the study participants were critical of the guidance they received from their cooperating teachers. Yet the cooperating teachers' influence was not believed to be especially strong in encouraging critical reflection about teaching. On this measure, all three claimed that their University Supervisor had a greater impact. Cooperating teachers were helpful for support, lesson ideas and resources, and advice about dealing with particular students. On the other hand, while most of our discussion in post-observation conferences centered on practical concerns stemming from particular lessons, the supervision process as a whole did appear successful in raising critical issues for reflection. In these three cases, cooperating teachers served different purposes than the university supervisor, and there was little to no collaboration between the two parties in each case. Still, this unilateral attempt to promote critical reflection appeared to meet with some success. Loughran (1996) argues that modeling can serve as a powerful method of promoting reflective teaching. Perhaps, their constant exposure to *my* reflection, via both the study and through supervision, modeled a form of reflection that was no as apparent in their cooperating teachers.

CONCLUSION

This study was largely an exploratory examination of how three beginning teachers incorporated a treasured aim of many teacher education programs into their experiences as student teachers. As such, the research raises more questions than it answers. A fundamental question raised concerns a matter of perspective. Given that critical reflection was not the predominant form of thinking for any of the three participants, do the observed instances of critical reflection and critically reflective teaching indicate that the glass is half empty or half full? More accurately, in this case, the question is better stated as-- is the glass 90% empty or 10% full? I interpret the findings optimistically. Certainly, these teachers might have been more critically reflective in different programs. Restructuring the various

components of the supervision process in this program likely would yield different results. Powerful opportunities for promoting critical reflection are suggested by student teaching experiences characterized by school and university people promoting the same goals. Yet even in my unilateral attempt in a program that made no wider attempt to promote a democratic vision of teaching met with some success. The development of critically reflective teaching in preservice teacher education is very much an open question.

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